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ML Directorate wraps 2004 Roadmap Review

by Pete Meltzer Jr., Materials and Manufacturing Directorate

WRIGHT-PATTERSON AIR FORCE BASE, Ohio — Leaders and representatives from industry, government and education gathered at the Dayton Convention Center July 13-15 to take part in the Air Force Research Laboratory's Materials and Manufacturing Directorate's 22nd annual Roadmap Review.

"The review offers a unique opportunity to learn more about the directorate's planned technology programs not only for the upcoming fiscal year but even further in the future," said Craig L. Neslen, program chief organizer and spokesman. This year's theme was "Materials solutions to enable the warfighter," and about 350 people attended.

"Roadmap Review provides an ideal forum for (directorate) scientists and engineers to interface with industry and academia on technology programs and jumpstart future technical collaborations," Mr. Neslen said. "The interaction and feedback we receive will inevitably result in a better technical product for the Air Force and the warfighter."

George F. Schmitt Jr., chief of the integration and operations division, welcomed attendees with a brief introduction, followed by Director Dr. Charles E. Browning, who provided an overview of the directorate's mission aimed at helping the Air Force and industry maintain affordable and effective defense materials and manufacturing capabilities.

"We look forward to Roadmap Review each year because it allows us to discuss our program accomplishments, present planning activities and future new starts, and provide our peers in industry and academia with direction and guidance that will keep the defense materials and manufacturing community headed in the right direction," Mr. Schmitt said.

In addition to overview briefings provided by the directorate's scientists and engineers on core technology areas, the program offers several workshops designed to provide more in-depth information about specific research areas being pursued. The workshops included discussions on polymers, organic matrix composites, tribology and coatings, metals, nondestructive evaluation, ceramics, materials and processes for sensors, system support, manufacturing and air base technologies.

Dr. Thomas A. Cruse, AFRL chief technologist, was the featured guest speaker. He serves as senior technical adviser to the AFRL commander. This year's Roadmap Review also included a special presentation by Terry J. Jagers, director of AFRL's Washington office and associate deputy assistant secretary of the Air Force for science, technology and engineering.

"We integrated our small business innovation research workshop with the Roadmap Review again this year, so that attendees could participate in both events," Mr. Neslen said. "The Small Business Innovative Research (SBIR) workshop allows our researchers to share topics for aerospace materials research and development that require innovative, 'out-of-the-box' solutions."

For more information about the directorate, visit <http://www.ml.afrl.af.mil>. @